

ROGERS REPORTS:

## A Russian Evolution, Too

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By WARREN ROGERS

WASHINGTON: The agony of the Soviet Union as it tries to join the Twentieth Century is nowhere better illustrated than in its handling of Gerald Brooke, the young Englishman just sentenced in Moscow to five years' loss of liberty for "anti-Communist agitation."

Much has been written about the historic near-paranoiac Russian distrust of foreigners. Even the most cursory study of the Soviet Union under Stalin evidences how completely and masterfully he played on this eccentricity to strengthen his own position. And, it must be noted, the vicious ventures of Napoleon and Hitler, among other violations of Soviet territory, provide ample argument for the stranger-shy Soviets.

Under Khrushchev, the globe-trotting salesman of "peaceful coexistence," startling inroads were made. Schooled at self-recrimination as individuals, thanks to the fess-up-and-die purge trials, Soviet officials broadened this proclivity to national recrimination. We in Washington, used to arguing with the Russians over who invented baseball, suddenly found ourselves being assured that the workers' paradise had termites but they were working on it.

Even physical appearances changed. Back in Stalin's day, the Soviet diplomats here were older and paunchier and sported white sidewall haircuts and double-breasted, balloon-trousered suits thick enough to defy a Siberian snowstorm. Suddenly, they were young and slim with Perry Como hair-



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dos and lightweight natural-shoulder jobs from Brooks Brothers, yet.

And the way they talked changed. They no longer sounded like Mischa Auer but like the kid you went to high school with who grew up, traveled a bit and came home again to show off his wares. It turned out that Soviet diplomats had a choice of English-language schools, one teaching Oxford English and the other teaching American.

All these are certainly little things, but they denote a major internal change of heart. It reflects Khrushchev's judgment that an old revolution is not a revolution at all and that, like Alice in Wonderland, the Soviet Union had to run fast just to stay in one place—in a world which it had set spinning in the first place by its threats to destroy it or, at the very least, to bury some of it.

The boldness of Khrushchev and his successors shows itself in many ways, the ordeal of Gerald Brooke being one. A few years ago, the young Englishman would have been pushed under the Orient Express or something, eliminating any need for a trial or any other trapping of due process of law. It is indicative of Soviet awareness of the existence of the outside world and Soviet desire to be a part of it, this juridical going-through-the-motions.

This will mean little personally to Brooke, suffering through one year in prison and four years in a penal labor camp for "anti-Communist agitation." But it may portend much for world peace.

Bureau's Headline Service